

2019 Submission - Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

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What are your suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination?

the community should be helped to understand the whole range of differing severity and types of mental illness and the concept of personality disorders.

What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent mental illness and to support people to get early treatment and support?

That trained professionals care strongly enough to work in a significantly strained mental health care delivery system. People should be allowed to go to their nearest mental health service or to their preferred one rather than being forced to accept boundaries drawn up more than 20 years ago. Use of Telemedicine and artificial intelligence based technology should be made available to encourage early indiscreet access to mental health services. GP clinics and ED s in rural and regional areas should have easy acee to Mental health Practitioners.

What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent suicide?

"Availability of helplines are working well. Governments need to recognise and accept suicide as a Public health Problem! this may enable more resources to be directed to wards this problem. More people die of suicides than road traffic accidents in victoria. suicide is the single largest preventable cause of Death in people 15 to 45 years of age! How ever one can visually see the "" Black Spot"" warnings on the roads and huge Billboards waring us of dangers from speeding to taking drugs while driving, but Suicide deaths are invisible! Public discussion about suicide and suicide risks should be encouraged ."

What makes it hard for people to experience good mental health and what can be done to improve this? This may include how people find, access and experience mental health treatment and support and how services link with each other.

"The amount of early childhood Trauma that people experience influences their Mental health. Early separation from Mother due to poor Maternity leave provision leads to an attachment disruption in the child that leaves a lifelong tell tale psychological mark on the child. By the time a person seeks help for overt mental health symptoms it is already too late. Poor access to Psychological services, Broken Families and gradual erosion of traditional means of solace and help seeking outside of mental health and mental illness setups is making people more vulnerable to the effects of mental ill health, Psychological suffering and ultimately Mental illness."

What are the drivers behind some communities in Victoria experiencing poorer mental health outcomes and what needs to be done to address this?

"Various Stark and striking Inequalities within our communities give rise to poor mentalHealth. Psychosocial determinants of mental health should be openly acknowledged. poverty, sexual abuse (intra familial), domestic violence, substance abuse & family disruptions are all interlinked

causes of poor mental health that can easily dovetail into a mental illness at times of added stress."

What are the needs of family members and carers and what can be done better to support them?

Family members and carers unwittingly contribute to a person's mental ill health and mental illness. It is disheartening to see that in clients of Public mental health services trans generational sexual abuse has happened with affected female members not having access to any treatment. These female members through no fault of their own pass on the contagion of this abuse through inadequate parenting thus making a child vulnerable to mental ill health and mental illness. Family members and carers need to have easy access to understand the causes of mental illness and seek support and treatments for themselves.

What can be done to attract, retain and better support the mental health workforce, including peer support workers?

Take steps to reduce the risk of violence towards mental health and Emergency department staff. Provide incentive to work in Mental health sector. Engage peer support workers in meaningful participation in care and policy decisions.

What are the opportunities in the Victorian community for people living with mental illness to improve their social and economic participation, and what needs to be done to realise these opportunities?

"Write of HECS debt in people with Mental illness. Make study and work participation financially attractive to people who have suffered from mental illness,"

Thinking about what Victorias mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?

"Provide more inpatient beds for treating people meaningfully for longer periods, and not discharge them prematurely to make room for another client. Care should be need based rather than Risk based! Make funding activity based and not Bed based. Counteract the power that unions hold to oppose meaningful change to mental health care delivery. The Victorian mental health system at times feels like it has been designed to provide employment for its staff rather than provide "CARE" to people who try to seek help from it. It feels as if at the time of deinstitutionalisation people did think about the patients with severe mental illness, but the rest of the population specially in rural areas were left to fend for themselves when seeking help for high prevalence disorders and personality disorders. Rural and Metro public mental health services have to be thought about separately and provisioned accordingly"

What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victorias mental health system and support improvements to last?

For improvements to last the state should have a new electronic database which Incorporate Artificial intelligence. Victorian Mental health service Governance systems should look at systems like the IBM WATSON and other system like it to help embed evidence based care in the system. At present every time there is staffing change a lot of knowledge is lost and it takes new staff quite a while to but up the necessary skills . when trained staff leave an organisation it takes years to find/ replace and retrain new staff!

Is there anything else you would like to share with the Royal Commission?

The royal commission may choose to recommend that Victorian Health care Budget should allocate a higher percentage to mental health than does now. There is publicly available evidence to show that poor mental health has a huge impact on all other health and economic outcomes the culmination of which is suicide.